

Vietnamese Cuisine



Vietnamese cuisine is famous for its common use of fish sauce, soy sauce and *hoisin* sauce. Vietnamese recipes use many vegetables, herbs and spices, including lemon grass, lime and *kaffir lime*. The Vietnamese also have a number of Buddhist vegetarian dishes. The most common meats used in Vietnamese cuisine are pork, beef, prawns, various kinds of tropical fish, and chicken. Duck is used less widely.

The three regions

Vietnamese cuisine can be basically divided into three categories, each pertaining to a specific region. Northern Vietnamese cooking is more simple and carries much Chinese (Cantonese) influence, and therefore employing more often the use of soy sauce. Southern Vietnamese cooking is where French influence (as well as the presence of Indian influence through curry) plays in. Lastly, Central Vietnamese cooking is perhaps the most unique of all, showcasing "pure" Vietnamese food. Central Vietnamese cuisine is also the most distinct in taste - being much, much spicier than its Northern and Southern counterparts, as well as being much more colorful. Central cooking is also obviously influenced by the royal setting (therefore by royal Vietnamese cooking), being not only very spicy and colorful but focusing on a multitude of small side dishes set on the table at once. The more dishes on a family table, the wealthier that particular family was.

"Unusual" Meats

The consumption of meats such as snake dog, turtle, and the like are a phenomenon enjoyed almost exclusively as "cocktail delicacies" with alcohol, and are not considered mainstream meats.

The typical Vietnamese family meal

A large bowl of rice to share amongst the family, each person has their own small bowls and wooden chopsticks.

Small bowls of fish sauce and soy sauce

Popularity of Vietnamese Cuisine

Vietnamese cuisine is widely available in the United States, Canada, France, Australia, Czech Republic, Germany, Poland, and Russia, whilst also popular in areas with dense Asian populations.

In recent years it has become popular in other Asian countries such as South Korea, Laos, etc.

Noodle Soups

Vietnamese cuisine boasts a huge variety of noodle soups, each with influences and origins from every corner of the country and each with a distinct and special taste. A common characteristic of many of these soups is a rich yet very clear broth.

Popular Vietnamese Dishes

Bò 7 Món - Vietnamese seven courses of beef. A less popular version is the Cá 7 Món- or, seven courses of fish. These multi-course meals are on the more higher-eating end of Vietnamese cuisine.

Pho - beef noodle soup, the most widely known Vietnamese dish. Typically eaten for breakfast in Vietnam, in other countries it is eaten for lunch and dinner as well.

Banh Bao - Steamed bun dumpling that can be stuffed. Vegetarian *banh bao* are popular food in Buddhist temples. Stuffed with slices of marinated "xa xieu" (from Chinese cooking) meat, tiny boiled duck eggs, and pork.

Banh Chung - Sticky rice wrapped in banana leaves and stuffed with *mung* beans, fatty pork and black sesame seeds.

Banh Mi Thit - Vietnamese Sandwich, French bread containing paté, Vietnamese mayo, different selections of Vietnamese cold meats (a large variety), pickled *daikon* and *mon*, *carrot*, cucumber slices. Often garnished with coriander, black pepper, and jalapeño pepper (optional). This food is common everywhere in Vietnam as a favorite of factory workers and school kids and eaten for any meal of the day, commonly breakfast and lunch.

Many varieties include:

Banh Mi Siu Mai - Banh Mi with big, juicy meatballs

Banh Mi Xa Xieu - BBQ Pork

Breakfast Banh Mi - served either with fried scrambled eggs wrapped within, or the more popular version eaten widely for breakfast in Vietnam: Eggs fried sunny-side-up with onions, sprinkled with Soy sauce or *Maggi* Sauce, and eaten with a fresh, sometimes buttered baguette.

Banh Xeo - Crepe made out of rice flour, coconut milk, and spring onions. It is pan-fried like the American omelet but stuffed with pork, shrimp, and bean sprouts (among other ingredients). Served wrapped with lettuce leaves and stuffed with mint (optional) and other herbs, and dipped in *Nuoc cham*. It is one of the few dishes with a French influence.

Bun Bo Hue - Spicy beef noodle soup originated from the Royal Hue City of Central Vietnam. The rice noodle used in this soup is different (much thicker) from the one used in Pho.

Com tam - grilled pork (either ribs or shredded) plus a Vietnamese dish called *bi* (thinly shredded pork mixed with cooked and thinly shredded pork skin) over broken rice (what the words "com tam" actually mean in Vietnamese).

Spring rolls or Egg roll - deep fried flour rolls filled with pork meat, Vietnamese yam, crab, shrimp, mushrooms and other ingredients.

Many varieties including:

Bi cuon - rice paper rolls with the *bi* mixture of thinly shredded pork and thinly shredded pork skin, among other ingredients, along with salad

Bo bia - fried daikon and carrots, Chinese sausage, shredded scrambled eggs, all wrapped with vermicelli noodle in a rice paper roll. Dipped into a spicy peanut sauce (with freshly roasted and grounded peanuts).

Ca cuon - a roll with fish and spring onions.



Bo la lot - A spiced beef rolled in betel leaf and grilled.

Summer rolls (also known as Vietnamese fresh rolls) - They are rice paper rolls that often include shrimp, herbs, rice vermicelli and other ingredients wrapped up and dipped in peanut sauce.

Bun Thit Nuong - Grilled pork (often shredded) and vermicelli noodles over a bed of greens (salad and sliced cucumber), herbs and bean sprouts.

Nem Nuong - Special Vietnamese BBQ Meatballs. Often reddish in color and with a distinct taste, grilled on skewers like kabobs.

Chao tom - Prawn paste/cake on sugarcane.

Goi - Vietnamese salad.

Many varieties including:

Goi Du Du - Vietnamese papaya salad typically with shredded papaya, shrimp, slices of pork, herbs.

Goi Hue Rau Muong - a salad dish originating from Hue (Central Vietnam), including the Morning Glory vegetable (*Rau Muong*).

Mi Xao Don - Crispy deep fried egg noodles, topped with a wide array of seafood, vegetables and shrimp in a gravy sauce.

Ga xa - lemongrass pork.

Thit Luc Lac - beef cut into cubes and marinated, served over greens, and sautéed onions and tomatoes.

Sup Mang Cua - a creamy bamboo-crab soup.

Banh Cuon - rice flour rolls and/or pancakes sometimes stuffed with ground pork and onion.

Vietnamese hotpot - a spicy variation of the Vietnamese sour soup, with many vegetables, meats and seafood, as well as some spicy herbs.

Banh beo - a central Vietnamese dish consisting of tiny and round rice flour pancakes, each served in a tiny round dish. They are topped with minced shrimp and other smaller ingredients.

Com Chien Duong Chau - a very popular and commonly eaten Vietnamese adaptation of the Chinese "Yang Chow fried rice".

Mi Bo Vien - egg noodle soup with beef balls, shrimp..

Bun Cha Hanoi - similar to *Bun Thit Nuong*. The pork meat is grinded and marinated, then rolled into balls, grilled and left in a bowl along with pickled vegetables, *daikon* and carrot. It is eaten with vermicelli and greens.

Banh Hoi - a special Vietnamese noodle that is extremely thin and woven into intricate bundles. Often topped with spring onion and a complementary meat dish.

Thit heo quay - BBQ pork, often eaten at weddings.

Thit vit quay - roast duck, eaten over rice.

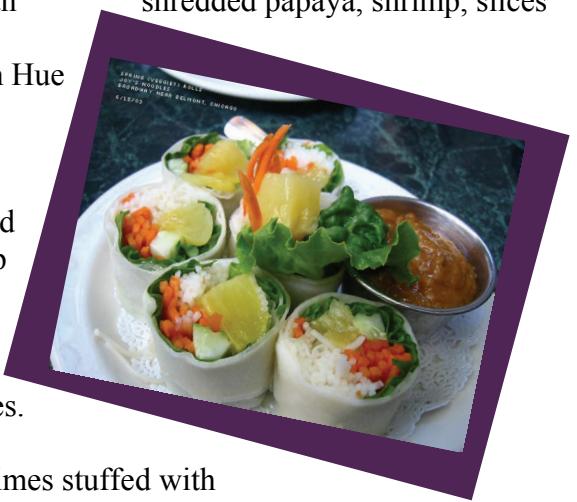
Com Ga Rau Thom - Vietnamese mint chicken rice.

Ca phe sua - strong coffee most often served with sweetened, condensed milk at the bottom of the cup to be stirred in.

Banh bot loc - Consists mainly of tiny rice dumplings made in a clear rice flour batter. Stuffed with shrimp and grounded pork. It is wrapped and cooked inside banana leaf..

Mi Quang - egg noodle soup dish.

shredded papaya, shrimp, slices



Desserts

Che - a sweet congee, served as a dessert. There are a huge variety of *Che* available, each with different fruits, beans and other ingredients used.

More Vietnamese Dishes

Bun Rieu - noodle soup made of thin rice noodles and topped with crab and shrimp paste.

Banh canh - a thick rice noodle soup with a more basic broth.

Mam - fermented fish in various styles.

Bo kho - Vietnamese beef and vegetable stew.

Prawn paste cake - a variant of the *Chao tom*

Thit/Ca Kho - a standard Vietnamese dish for families, *thit/ca kho* is braised meat (often pork) or fish in a sweet and tangy caramel sauce.

Canh Chua - Vietnamese sour soup.

Bun Mang Vit - bamboo and duck noodle soup.

Nem Nguoi - a variation of the *Nem nuong* meatballs. Very spicy, eaten almost exclusively as a cocktail snack.

Bun Oc - vermicelli with snails

Banh Bot Chien - a Chinese influenced pastry with many versions all over Asia, the Vietnamese version features a special tangy soy sauce on the side.

Paté Chaud - a French inspired meat-filled pastry.

Vegetables

Chayote

Cucumber

Eggplant

Daikon

Water spinach

Bok choy

Carrots

Cauliflower

Cabbage



Fruits

Durian

Jackfruit (*mit*)

Pitaya (dragon fruit)

Lychee

Tomatoes

Rambutan

Mango

Herbs

Basil

Coriander leaves

Lemon grass

Ngo gai - leafy herb

Ngo om - rice paddy herb

Rau răm - Vietnamese Coriander
Thai Basil
Coconut milk
Cilantro
Long coriander

Condiments

Hoisin sauce - a Chinese dipping sauce for dishes including Peking Duck, spring rolls and barbecued pork. Known in Vietnamese as *uong đen* (literally *black sauce*).

Nuoc cham - Literally “Dipping sauce”. Made chiefly from fish sauce, chili peppers, sugar, lime or lemon juice or vinegar, and garlic.

Soy sauce

Fish sauce



Other ingredients

Rice paper - paper made from parts of the rice plant, like rice straw or rice flour

Compiled by Paula Scott, USU Extension, Salt Lake County

Source: Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cuisine_of_Vietnam



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